

Louisiana Governor's



on Juvenile Justice

# *Workshop Session IV*

Friday, April 29  
8:30 to 10:00 a.m.  
Fulton

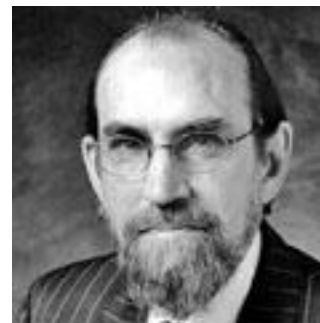
***EXTRA! EXTRA! READ ALL ABOUT IT!***

Effectively and Productively Using News Media and Public Relations

Rudy Gomez  
Jim Harris



**Gomez**



**Harris**

# Introduction

## Who we are

Harris, DeVille and Associates, Inc., a full-service issues management and public relations firm, has been working with Louisiana Models for Change (LA MfC) since 2008.



# Introduction *(continued)*

## What we do

Throughout this period, HDA continues to:

- Develop key messages for systems reform in juvenile justice,
- Identify potential venues and opportunities for MfC communications,
- Track media hits for articles and op-eds relative to juvenile justice reform,
- Participate in meetings, conferences, and legislative hearings pertinent to the MfC initiative,
- Conduct media training sessions for third-party stakeholders,
- Inform third parties, such as legislators and others, about the MfC initiative and juvenile justice in Louisiana, and
- Maintain a list of statewide key media contacts and reporters, as well as other juvenile justice stakeholders.

# Mechanics of Communication

## The basics

- The media environment
- Understanding the media
- Why the media is important
- Understanding reporters
- Using key messages

# The Media Environment

- The explosion of media
  - Print
  - Broadcast
  - Online
  - Now: Social Media
- News reach can be global
- News reach is INSTANTANEOUS
- **Bottom line: Message management is critical**



# Understanding the Media

- Reporters are looking for what is **new** and **different**, for what is **controversial**
- The media are typically guided by the five C's — **catastrophe, crisis, conflict, crime, and corruption**



# Why the Media is Important

- Determines public/customer perception of your organization, its products, and you
- Affects organizational value
- Affects citizen support
- Affects employee morale
- Keyword: Reputation, reputation, reputation

# Understanding Reporters

- Short attention span – they are deadline driven
- Skeptical and cynical (often where the “negative bias” comes in)
- Many are now overworked because of multi-media responsibilities (video, blogs, etc.)
- Reporters want answers to four questions:
  - What happened?
  - Why did it happen?
  - Who screwed up?
  - What does it mean?
- Reporters are all looking for the conclusion



# Using Key Messages

## What is a message?

- **Brief, positive points** you want to make
- Should reflect the **information you want to convey**
- Broad, memorable **themes**
- **Factually** defensible

# Using Key Messages *(continued)*

## Messages that get through

- Messages must be **clear**
- Messages must be **true**
- Messages can try to **address questions in advance**
- Messages must **make sense** to you
- To deliver a message successfully, you **must believe the message**

# Using Key Messages *(continued)*

## Repetition is critical

- Messages capture action, advocacy, and political position
- Your message communicates your frame, your position, and your action all at once – before you lose people's attention
- Simply put, once you have a message, use it over and over and over again whenever you communicate with the media

# Sample of Key Messages Developed for LA MfC

## **Louisiana is at a critical point in juvenile justice reform.**

- We have made significant progress, but the hurricanes shifted the state's focus.
- The system is stressed following the hurricanes, with more at-risk youth and families than ever before, and the number of treatment staff and other professionals that have left Louisiana.
- Local government has continued the work as possible; however, state government will need to provide ongoing leadership, especially in the development of the community-based components of regionalized care.
- The state has an opportunity to strengthen local communities by implementing community-based interventions that increase public safety, save money, and are proven to work. We can also slide backward into over-reliance on juvenile jails, which are costly and ineffective, and put low-risk and high-risk youth together.
- The state has the opportunity to take advantage of investments from major foundations – including the MacArthur Foundation Models for Change Program and Annie E. Casey Foundation – and to further those partnerships to advance juvenile justice to the gold standard.

# Sample of Key Messages

## Developed for LA MfC *(continued)*

**Treating youth in their communities is an investment in the future of the child, the family, the community, and the state.**

- The cost of incarcerating a youth is \$50,000 per year; the cost to treat that juvenile in community programs is between \$1,300 and \$5,000 per year for some of the sound, research-driven practices.
- Community treatment programs give young people the skills they need to become productive citizens.
- It is not necessary to remove funding from existing programs, but it is time to transition staff and services to best practices and programs that work, so that our tax dollars are used wisely.
- Everyone must be involved in the rehabilitation of a youth, including families, schools, and institutions.
- There should be a range of community-based programs that deal with low-risk youth, and only high-risk youth who are a threat to the community end up in high-cost facilities.

# Sample of Key Messages

## Developed for LA MfC *(continued)*

**The public safety of a community will only improve if the factors driving delinquent behavior are targeted and treated.**

- After incarceration, youths return to their communities disengaged and often worse behaviorally; more than 60% reenter the prison system.
- Youths become productive citizens with proper intervention; with what is often well-intentioned yet inadequate treatment, they stay the same or get worse.
- When low-risk youths are placed with serious, chronic, and often violent offenders, the low-risk kids tend to become high-level delinquents.
- Good treatment addresses public safety issues.

# Sample of Key Messages

## Developed for LA MfC *(continued)*

### **Too many youths end up in the group home and juvenile prison system when they need other types of treatment.**

- There is a pressing need for consistent tools for screening and assessing youth for risk and needs; this needs to occur to assure public safety and proper treatment are addressed.
- More than 75% of youths in the system have mental health or substance abuse problems, but typically do not qualify for services from state agencies. Often, parents cannot access care for early or effective interventions. These include mental health treatment, substance abuse treatment, family counseling, and crisis intervention.
- The “right” types of early intervention are key to preventing unnecessary court engagement, incarceration, and future delinquency.
- Zero-tolerance rules in schools provide an often unnecessary pipeline into the court system, since there are few other options for dealing with the youth or family’s behavior.
- Many of Louisiana’s youth are placed in expensive out-of-home placements for non-violent offenses, like shoplifting or breaking probation, or even chronic running away, which can be handled with effective alternatives to the court system.
- Adolescent behavior has not changed, but the adult supervision of youth in homes and communities as well as our reaction to common adolescent behavior has. We are often more punitive than necessary and have fewer options for the youth or family to get help.

# Sample of Key Messages

## Developed for LA MfC *(continued)*

**We must provide necessary skills to our workforce that deal directly with our youth and families, including behavioral health and juvenile justice.**

- Louisiana does not offer advanced masters degrees in social work that include extensive coverage of juvenile delinquency or the known effective delinquency intervention practices; however, social workers comprise the predominance of the workforce engaging these youth daily in our state.
- Social workers and counselors receive on-the-job training, which is often outdated and often based on out of date practices.
- Many people seeking degrees in social work leave the state for post-graduate training and employment, and rarely return.
- Direct care staff in juvenile facilities and community programs need specialized skills in order to provide effective treatment and interventions that protect public safety and improve the behavior of the youth and families.
- Most treatment can be delivered by bachelor level and masters level staff with specialized training and certification, thereby creating an advanced work force in Louisiana.
- The youth leaving our juvenile justice system also can benefit from skill-based job training in order to leave with a trade or degree. Academic success and job skills are key factors in youth doing well in the community, since they are able to get a job and become productive citizens.



# Using Key Messages

## The importance of being prepared

- Know your message areas
  - Concise
  - Free of jargon
  - What does the message mean to the audience?
- Visualize the headline
- Know your vulnerabilities
- Anticipate tough questions

# **Media and Communications Outreach in Action: Louisiana Models for Change**

# Media and Communications Outreach in Action: LA Models for Change

## HDA's LA MfC communications objectives

- **Position** LA MfC as a credible source of information about much-needed change in Louisiana's juvenile justice system
- **Promote** and encourage consistent messaging from LA MfC grant leads, coordinators, and key external stakeholder groups
- **Enhance** the organization's credibility throughout the grant process
  - Specifically through developing and utilizing data to support and underscore MfC messages

# Media and Communications Outreach in Action: LA Models for Change *(continued)*

## Target Audiences: Media

- Reporters covering juvenile justice issues
- Editorial boards
- Columnists
- Capitol/Political beat reporters
- Business publications

# Media and Communications Outreach in Action: LA Models for Change *(continued)*

## Target Audiences: Strategic Communication

- Louisiana Models for Change grantees
- Third-party stakeholders (at all levels)
  - Louisiana Supreme Court
  - Office of Juvenile Justice
  - Children's Cabinet
  - Juvenile Justice Implementation Commission
  - Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana
- Local elected officials
- Legislative and statewide officials
- General public

# Media and Communications Outreach in Action: LA Models for Change *(continued)*

## Communications tools

- Site-specific/issue-specific one-pagers
- Key messages
- Responsive messages (developed as issues arise)
- Letters to the editor and op-eds for media publication
- PowerPoint presentations
- Website materials

# Media and Communications Outreach in Action: LA Models for Change *(continued)*

## Why it is important to communicate to the media and other audiences

- For juvenile justice reform to continue, it must remain part of the conversation
- To remain part of the conversation, we must continue to communicate the importance of improving the juvenile justice system
- Like any other product, we must sell the importance of investment in the juvenile justice system for the future of our children, and the wellbeing of our state

# Media and Communications Outreach in Action: LA Models for Change *(continued)*

## Media Hits

- Associated Press article, February 2009: **Innovation in Juvenile Justice**
  - HDA worked closely with the LA MfC lead entity and the Associated Press writer to develop this piece, which highlighted the importance of data in juvenile justice reform
  - Carried in over 20 papers statewide, including:
    - *Advertiser*, Lafayette, LA; February 23, 2009
    - *Advocate*, Baton Rouge, LA; February 23, 2009
    - *American Press*, Lake Charles, LA; February 22, 2009
    - *KATC-TV*, Lafayette, LA; February 22, 2009
    - *News-Star*, Monroe, LA; February 23, 2009
    - *Times-Picayune*, New Orleans, LA; February 22, 2009



# Media and Communications Outreach in Action: LA Models for Change *(continued)*

## Media Hits

- Opinion Editorial, June 2009: **Focus on Juvenile Justice Reform**
  - Written by LA Supreme Court Justice Catherine “Kitty” Kimball
  - HDA developed and disseminated this piece with Justice Kimball, which addressed the history and future of juvenile justice reform in the state
  - The op-ed was carried in over a dozen newspapers across the state, including:
    - *Advertiser*, Lafayette, LA; June 19, 2009
    - *Advocate*, Baton Rouge, LA; June 23, 2009
    - *American Press*, Lake Charles, LA; June 17, 2009
    - *News-Star*, Monroe, LA; June 21, 2009
    - *Times-Picayune*, New Orleans, LA; June 19, 2009

# Media and Communications Outreach in Action: LA Models for Change *(continued)*

## Media Hits

- Letter to the Editor, July 2010: **Uniform Standards are Coming**
  - Written by LA State Representative Damon Baldone
  - HDA disseminated this Letter to the Editor, which addressed the passage of the detention standards bill passed during the 2010 Regular Legislative Session
  - Carried in several newspapers in the state, including:
    - *Advocate*, Baton Rouge, LA; July 14, 2010
    - *Houma Today*, Houma, LA; July 7, 2010
    - *Times-Picayune*, New Orleans, LA; July 17, 2010
    - *Town Talk*, Alexandria, LA; July 14, 2010

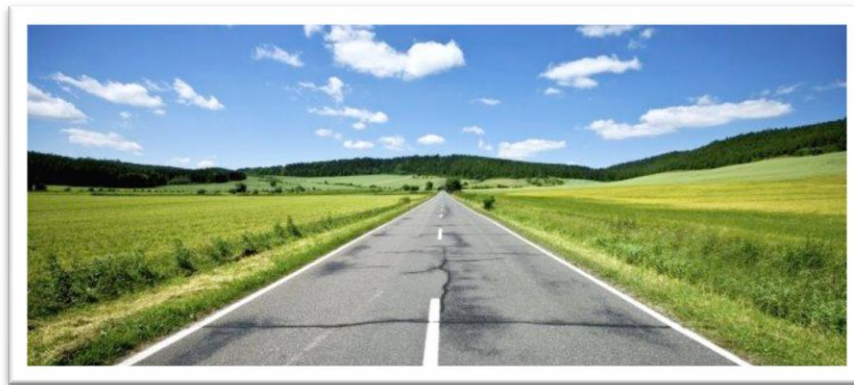
# Media and Communications Outreach in Action: LA Models for Change *(continued)*

## Media Hits

- HDA has also been successful in prompting local reporters to attend Models for Change meetings and events, as well as to publish profiles and feature stories on local leaders and decision makers across the state's juvenile justice arena

# The Communication Strategy Continues

- **There are many more stories to tell**
- And we all need to tell the juvenile justice reform story
- We must talk about the good, the bad, and the ugly, if we are to advance the cause of juvenile justice reform
- The next phase of LA MfC:  
**Dissemination** and **Sustainability**



# Introduction

## Who We Are

SSA Consultants is a management consulting firm based in Baton Rouge that has been working with MacArthur Foundation and Louisiana Models for Change since the fall of 2009.

SSA CONSULTANTS

# Introduction *(continued)*

## What We Do

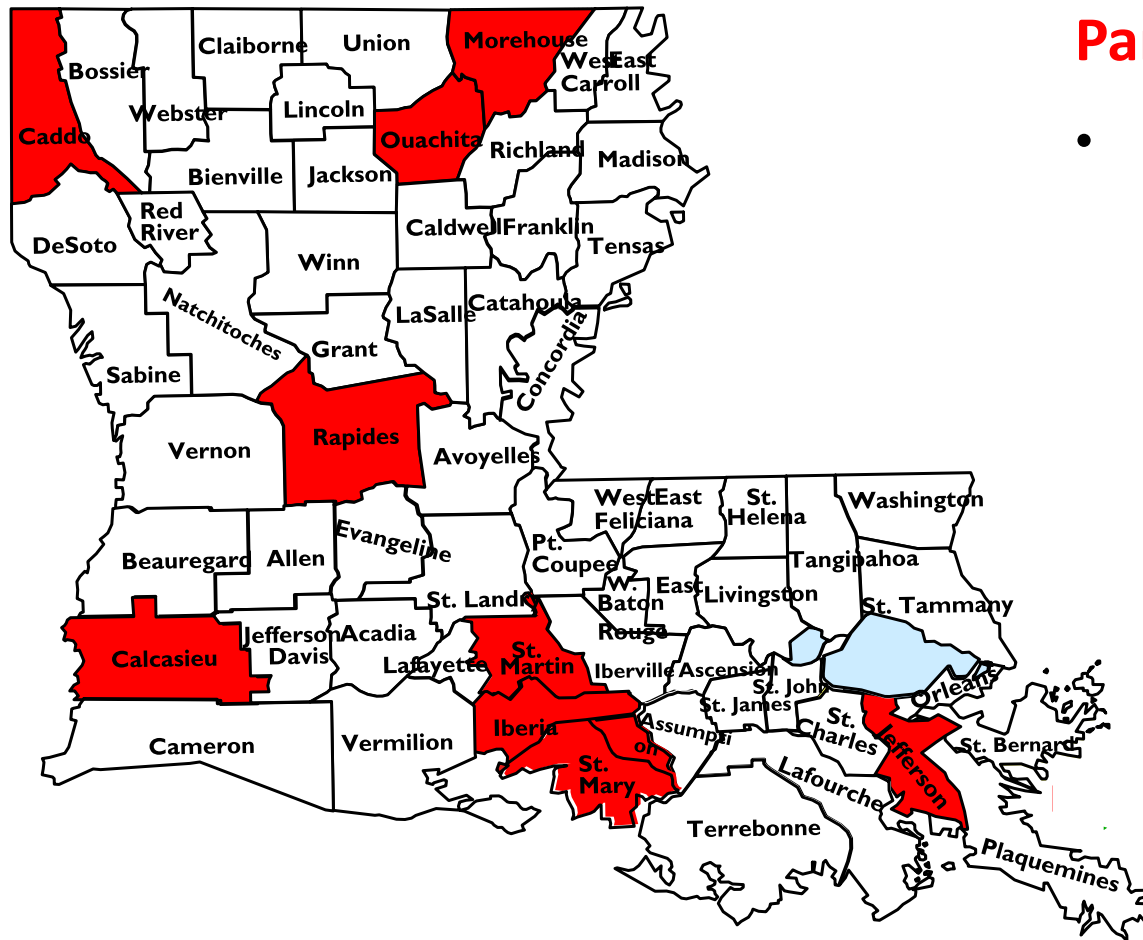
Throughout this period, SSA continues to:

- Develop strategies and plans for the statewide dissemination of the LA MfC work products,
- Package LA MfC products for wider distribution,
- Collaborate with LA MfC grantees and stakeholders to facilitate dissemination of LA MfC products,
- Develop strategies and plans for development of a sustainable juvenile justice reform effort in Louisiana that leverages the LA MfC reform momentum created by the LA MfC grantees, and
- Project manage the execution of approved sustainability strategies and plans.

# Overview

- The MacArthur Foundation began supporting juvenile justice systems reform efforts in Louisiana in 2006 as part of the **Models for Change** initiative
  - Committed \$10 million in grant funds to Louisiana grantees
  - Provided a National Resource Bank (NRB) of juvenile justice experts to facilitate the Louisiana grant work
  - Created a statewide network of Louisiana grantees willing to examine the current system and propose and test innovative reforms

# LA MfC Network



## Partners in Reform

- A statewide network of local grantees and technical assistance recipients including local grant sites (in red), state agencies, universities, and professional organizations



# LA MfC Grantees

- Rapides Parish
- Jefferson Parish
- Calcasieu Parish
- 16<sup>th</sup> Judicial District  
(Iberia, St. Martin, and St. Mary Parishes)
- Caddo Parish
- 4<sup>th</sup> Judicial District  
(Ouachita and Morehouse Parishes)
- Children's Cabinet
- Office of Juvenile Justice
- Louisiana Supreme Court
- LSU Health Sciences Center  
School of Public Health
- University of Louisiana at Monroe
- LSU Law Center
- University of New Orleans
- Louisiana District Attorneys Association
- Louisiana Council of Family and Juvenile  
Court Judges
- Juvenile Justice Project of Louisiana
- Juvenile Regional Services
- Children's Coalition of Northeast Louisiana
- Louisiana Juvenile Detention Association
- Northshore Technical College –  
Florida Parishes Branch Campus

# Three “Grant-Making” Areas

- Alternatives to Formal Processing
  - Best practice diversion as alternatives to formal processing/adjudication or secure confinement
- Evidence-based Community Services
  - Implementation of screening/assessment and treatment services that are supported by research and based upon successful outcomes
- Disproportionate Minority Contact (DMC)
  - Identifying DMC with data at key decision point and providing specific interventions and tracking success

# Alternatives to Formal Processing and Secure Confinement

- Work is resulting in models for local needs assessment, tools for youth planning boards, interagency collaboration including data sharing and model diversion guidelines and programs

# Examples of Work Completed

- Local jurisdictions with fully developed Children and Youth Planning Boards (CYPB) with tools for use by any planning boards statewide (disseminated by the CC)
- Development and implementation of local information/data sharing agreements (disseminated by the CC)
- Development of diversion guidelines by the LDAA
- Development and implementation of detention screening tools
- Development and implementation of school exhaustion forms
- Data-driven decision-making

# Evidence-Based Community Services

- Site-based work is resulting in prompt screening/assessment, wider utilization of evidence-based programs, expanded funding opportunities, cost-effective programs, improved outcomes for youth and families, and provider/system accountability

# Examples of Work Completed

- Implementation of best practice screening and assessment tools at entry into the system and post-adjudication (SAVRY) in all MfC Sites and statewide
- Implementation of Functional Family Therapy (FFT) in five MfC sites across the state
- Implementation of RFP process in Jefferson Parish to promote the use of outcome-based practices that meet the needs of JJ youth

# Disproportionate Minority Contact

- MfC work is resulting in the establishment of model DMC data collection and analysis capabilities at parish level that will lead to creation of interventions that address DMC; (DMC data collection should follow national standards for race and ethnicity)

# Examples of Work Completed

- Development and utilization of detention screening tools in Jefferson and Rapides parishes
- Systematic implementation of assessment tools
- Establishment of data sets to track DMC appropriately and what is successful
- Increased local dialogue to include DMC issues via planning boards and other local forums



# Lessons Learned

- Successful and effective reform occurs only with collaboration, leadership, and data driven decision-making
  - **Local partners** to develop and implement community-based reform models
  - **State partners** to provide the infrastructure for statewide reform and adopt local models
  - **University partners** to support reform efforts through data collection/analysis/outcome monitoring and educating juvenile justice professionals
  - **Professional organization partners** to develop guidelines and disseminate best practices among peers, lawmakers, families, and stakeholders

# Leveraging the LA MfC Investment

Two parallel efforts

1. **Dissemination** of LA MfC “products”
2. **Sustainability** of LA MfC reform momentum

# Dissemination of LA MfC “Products”

- Compile master list of LA MfC work products
- Evaluation of work products master list
  - Impact/Benefit of adoption
  - Ease of packaging and adoption
  - Audience/Customers/Demand
  - Expert support resources/champions/partners
- Design and production of priority products
- Release/Distribution/Promotion of products

# Dissemination of LA MfC “Products”

## Dissemination strategies

1. Collaboration with Louisiana juvenile justice stakeholder groups and associations
2. Statewide conferences and annual meetings
3. Web-based access to products
4. Media
5. Testimony/Presentations – policymakers

# Sustainability of LA MfC Momentum

- Gauge interest/need for sustainable effort
- Vision/Mission
- Scope of activity/services
- Structure/Entity
- Resources/Operations plan